

THE ALMA RECORD

BARCOCK & GROSSKOPF, Proprietors

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OFFICIAL PAPER OF THE CITY OF ALMA, MICHIGAN

MORE COST OF WAR

In a recent issue of The Record we discussed the cost of war and quoted facts from the report of the Legislative Committee of Investigation. In that article we dealt with the cost of aircraft and ordnance.

A further examination of the report shows the following very interesting and enlightening facts concerning camps and cantonments, production of explosives, powder and gas, and the cost and value of port terminals. We submit these facts that Record patrons may read, with an open mind and draw their own conclusions:

Construction of Camps and Cantonments—We expended \$1,200,000,000 for the construction of camps and cantonments largely by the cost-plus system, a system adopted by the War Department. By this system costs were increased, labor demoralized, the completion of the camps was delayed, soldiers called to the colors were subjected to conditions that induced disease and death, and from 40 to 60 per cent of the money was wasted.

Twenty-two million dollars was spent for fees to favored contractors on camps and cantonments, most of which would have been saved had this work been let by bids.

Production of Tanks—Many millions were spent for the production of tanks, the exact amount of which has not been computed. Not a single tank of American manufacture reached the front before the Armistice.

To complete our tank program we needed 1,200 tanks, which were to cost \$25,000 each. To build these we started an immense steel and concrete factory in France, which was to assemble and turn out 100 of these tanks a day, or the entire supply in 12 days. The British were to furnish the guns and armor and ship them to France for assembly, while we were to furnish the engines and running gear, and ship them to France for assembly. The British supplied their part but we supplied nothing. The factory was unfinished at the Armistice and never produced anything.

Production of Explosives, Powder and Gas—The production of high explosives, powder and gas was likewise a humiliating failure from the viewpoint of the results obtained. This is what we got:

(a) We spent \$60,100,000 to build a powder plant at Nitro, W. Va. It never produced a pound of powder for the war. After the Armistice there was stored at Nitro personal property worth, at a fair cash value, \$10,000,000. Both plant and property were sold after the Armistice for \$8,551,000, most of which is in deferred payments.

(b) We paid the Hercules Powder Co., for operating the Nitro plant \$11,293,737.11. They produced no powder that we could use in the war.

(c) We spent \$2,900,000 in furnishing electrical machinery and building electric lines for the Virginia Powder Company at Nitro, W. Va., and after we had built them a first class system, giving them a practical monopoly of the Kanawha Valley, the Government settled with them for \$81,000 and in addition gave them a long-time contract to furnish electric power for the naval armor plant at Charleston, W. Va.

(d) We spent approximately \$90,000,000 in the construction and operation of a powder plant at Nashville, Tenn., called Old Hickory, and which produced no powder that could be used in the war.

(e) We spent \$116,194,974.37 on nitrate plants at Sheffield, Ala.; Muscle Shoals, Ala.; Toledo, Ohio, and Cincinnati, Ohio. These plants did not produce a pound of nitrates that could be used in the war.

(f) We spent for poison gas \$116,000,000. Not a pound of American gas was ever fired in an American shell, and only about 100 tons of American gas loaded in shells, ever reached the field dumps.

(g) The Government built three picric acid plants and seven plants to make phenol and acid required by them. This was to furnish picric acid for the French, who desired it for explosives. None of these plants produced a pound of anything that was used in the war. The plants cost us \$35,000,000. The French were to pay the whole bill, but the War Department settled with France for \$14,000,000.

Port Terminals—We spent \$17,116,000 in constructing a port terminal at Charleston, S. C., which was built in an isolated swamp 10 miles up the Cooper River, where it was necessary to dredge to reach it. There never was a pound of produce, a man, or an animal shipped either out or into this terminal during the war.

We spent \$127,661,000 for port terminals at Boston, Brooklyn, Newark, Philadelphia, Norfolk, Charleston, and New Orleans. Some of them were not finished and none of them were used for anything except storage during the war.

The foregoing summarizes briefly the conclusions reached by the Select Committee of the House of Representatives on Expenditures in the War Department after months of careful investigation. The conclusions of that Committee remain uncontradicted.

Excessive Orders for Less Essential Things—No less startling than the Government's failure to produce essential things such as guns, shells, gas, aeroplanes and tanks, was the mismanagement incidental to the placing of excessive orders and the making of unnecessary expenditures for less essential things. A few instances verified by the records are sufficient:

(a) We ordered 41,100,152 pairs of shoes and received deliveries of 32,227,450 pairs, for 3,518,837 men.

(b) We bought and received 500,326 double sets of harness and 110,828 single sets. We had, in all, during the period of the war 580,182 horses, of which only 67,948 were shipped overseas and 96,000 died.

(c) We bought 945,000 saddles and had, in all, 86,418 cavalry horses.

(d) We bought 2,850,853 halters.

(e) We bought 585,615 saddle bags.

(f) We bought 1,637,199 horse brushes.

(g) We bought 2,033,204 nose bags.

(h) We bought 1,148,364 horse covers.

(i) We bought for our Ordnance officers 712,510 complete sets of spur straps, about 36 sets for each officer.

(j) We bought 8,781,615 horseshoes.

(k) We bought 195,000 branding irons.

We ordered 149,456,611 hard bread cans and used 31,500,000 during the war.

Election is now but a little ways off. Are you prepared, Mr. or Mrs. Voter to cast an intelligent ballot on that day, or are you depending upon someone else to tell you how you ought to vote. Now we know that the latter is much the easier course to pursue. But our country demands of us at this time our best and most strenuous effort. Let's all take time to inform ourselves and vote intelligently.

It will cost fifty-two cents on a thousand dollars valuation to pass the \$80,000 bond issue to complete the water works. St. Johns nearly burned up last Friday and is without both water and light because they did not have a stand pipe and could not fight fire. It would seem a man must be cross-eyed or blind to his own interests to vote against this necessary measure.

BUSINESS SENSE

Western Paper Asks That The Public Be Fair.

In a recent issue of the Post Intelligence of Seattle, Wash., there appeared an interesting and sensible editorial under the heading, "Interesting Reading," in which the editor said:

"Some of the most interesting reading for the average person in the coming year will be in the advertising columns of the newspapers, for in this literature will be related the decline and fall of prices. At least this reversal appears to be on the way. The midsummer recession in business may not be more marked than is usual at this season of the year, but it is clear that the public attitude is that of anticipation of distinct reduction in prices, and this assumption is encouraged by lowering of charges for some classes of merchandise and for services.

"The public fancies that the merchant has welcomed the swift and extreme rise in prices, and has misjudged the amount of profit which retail dealers have made during the war period and since. But the fact is that the experience has not been pleasant for those who are in business with the expectation of continuing, for it has been a time of disorganization, of uncertainty, of exasperating delays in the delivery of stock, of arrogance on the part of many manufacturers, of purchasing power by customers so far beyond that of normal times that demands for stock could not be anticipated, and with a far different assortment upon the shelves than constituted the range before the war. What will come out of the process of gravitation which has begun cannot be figured out by the merchant. He can only watch and wait, alert to shape his course as conditions develop; he cannot foresee the basis upon which affairs will settle; he can only venture a guess whether it will be on silk or calico.

"The public, getting its view of the mercantile business in show windows or in walking along counters, sees nothing of the complexity of operations, and only the expert accurately discerns the many factors that are involved. Business today is a highly elaborated affair; competition imposes conditions that burden an enterprise with slow assets or with definite losses; the paper profits of this month may be wiped out and replaced by a deficit a month hence; the whim of a portion of the people may bring an insistent but transient demand for unprofitable goods, but the merchant cannot ignore a demand. He must keep stocked with everything that may be called for, carry dead weight with his active lines, watch every turn of the market, every change in local conditions, contend incessantly with competitors in courtesy, and be circumspect in all of his activities to avert disaster.

"Few have these things in mind when they indiscriminately denounce the 'profiteer.' Few recognize the fact that stock bought cheaply and sold at high prices must be replaced with stock bought at high prices which may have to be sold at loss. The voracious item of 'overhead' absorbs a big portion of the receipts from sales and is but slightly altered whether business is dull or brisk. Charity that begins at home hastens down town and makes the round of the stores, and the merchant is less a free moral agent when he has to face a request for a donation. If the public could spend a day or two behind the counters it would revise its opinion of the degree to which the men of business are profiting by the after-war disorganization. Few would envy those who must steer a course back toward a normal basis.

"So, when readers of advertising announcements scan the columns and find pleasure in the evidence of decline in prices, they should see something of what lies back of those bids for patronage and realize that it is for the best interests of all that the process of gravitation be gradual. The business of merchandising is as inseparably related to other factors of prosperity in a community as are wages and conditions of employment. The injury of one affects all."

FOREST HILL

Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Jackson of Mt. Pleasant called on Mr. and Mrs. Edgar Holten Sunday.

Mrs. Flora Richardson was the guest of relatives in Detroit last week.

Fred Sibley from near Mt. Pleasant was in town on business Monday.

Mrs. Bert Kemp is entertaining her sister from Ohio.

Mrs. Wm. Myers called on Mr. and Mrs. John Pitt Thursday afternoon.

Ross Shaver of Florence, Alabama, is visiting relatives in town.

Leslie Wood and son, Vernon, are on the sick list.

Miss Blanche Hamilton is home from Saginaw on a week's vacation.

Mrs. Della Roth of Lansing spent the week end with friends in town.

Ward Creech was home from Lansing over the week end.

GIVE AWAY GOODS

As an advertising proposition the Fuller Tire & Electric Company gave away last Saturday afternoon to Alma women a number of electrical articles. The articles given, and those who received them follows: a One Minute Electric washer was given to Mrs. Frank Clow; Mrs. Hyde received an American Beauty Flatiron, Mrs. Leo Wood received a toaster stove, Mrs. Elisha Church got a desk lamp, and Mrs. Manning, an electric fan.

CHANGE MEETING NIGHTS

The George W. Myers, Post No. 132, American Legion, has decided to change the nights of the meeting of the post from the first and third Tuesday evenings of the month, to the first and third Thursday evening in each month. Members of the post are asked to observe the change. The meetings will be called at 8:00 p. m. as usual.

MICKIE SAYS

HALT!!

CORPORAL O' THE GUARD—
POST NUMBER ONE—DOUBBLE
TIME IT OUT HERE—THERE'S
A LOAFER TWINN' T' OODLE
IN 'THOUT ANY OFFICIAL
BIZNESS!!



CRITERION MALE QUARTETTE.

The Criterion Male Quartette of New York City has won for itself an enviable reputation. The individual and collective merits of these artists are unquestionable, and no quartette in this country has gained such notable



CRITERION MALE QUARTETTE.

comment from critics of music. They have appeared on the same programs with the late Madame Nordica, David Bispham, Madame Schumann-Heink, the U. S. Marine band, etc. At Ocean Grove they appeared with "Billy" Sunday, and during the ten weeks of their engagement sang before 500,000 people.

BRADY SCHOOL NOTES

(By the Fourth and Fifth Grades)

The school house is so close to the road that threshing machines going by make so much noise that we can hardly hear, so we watch them pass. The farmers are threshing clover seed and beans now.

Many farmers are hauling beets to the station.

The boys play ball at noon and at recesses and have lots of fun.

The girls are starting a sewing class.

We have our box social October 27, 1920. Don't forget the date.

Marshall Michaels has been visiting his sister in Wayne for a few days.

ELM HALL

Mrs. Chas. Brooks will leave Thursday to spend the winter with her son, Carroll, at Cleveland.

Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Davis, Mr. and Mrs. Claude Davis, Mr. and Mrs. E. Croton and family motored to Bay City Sunday.

A few friends called on Chas. Elliott Saturday evening to aid him in celebrating his birthday. Refreshments were served.

Mrs. A. Ward spent the week end at Alma.

Mrs. Alice Butcher spent Sunday with Mrs. Button at St. Louis.

Fred Elliot and family spent Sunday with his parents.

THAT BAD BACK

Do you have a dull, steady ache in the small of the back—sharp, stabbing twinges when stooping or lifting—distressing urinary disorders? For bad back and weakened kidneys Alma residents recommend Doan's Kidney Pills. Read this Alma woman's statement.

Mrs. T. H. Elliget, 427 E. Downie St., says: "About eighteen years ago I suffered with my kidneys and back. Often when I was in a stooping position, I had to straighten up by inches, as severe pains darted all through my back. My back got so bad that when I washed dishes, I couldn't empty the pan and had to have someone else do it for me. I had severe headaches and specks floated in front of me. My kidneys were in such a poor condition that I always felt tired, weak and worn out. A friend saw my condition and recommended Doan's Kidney Pills. I bought a few boxes and they surely did grand work. I am feeling fine since Doan's cured me."

Get at all dealers. Foster-Milburn Co., Mfrs., Buffalo, N. Y.

Men Wanted to Sell Groceries

Selling Experience Not Necessary

One of the World's largest grocers, (capital over \$1,000,000.00) wants ambitious men in your locality to sell direct to consumer nationally known brands of an extensive line of groceries, paints, roofings, lubricating oils, stock foods, etc. No capital required. Write today. State age and occupation. John Sexton & Co., 352 W. Illinois St., Chicago, Ill. 64-1w

Record want ads pay.

The Flowers Mausoleum Company

Ten Reasons Why You Should Own Apartments in the Compartment Mausoleum of Alma

1st—Because it is in keeping with the progress of the times.

2nd—A mausoleum is a beautiful resting place for loved ones, and it is a sane, practical, up-to-date mode of interment.

3rd—It is a place where fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, husbands and wives can lie side by side through that long night of sleep not an arm's length apart, each in a little room perfectly dry, where neither water, nor damp nor mould entereth.

4th—It being endowed in perpetuity, this place, so sacred to you, will not be desecrated by alien hands as is too often the case in abandoned cemeteries.

5th—The Mausoleum will be endowed with a fund large enough to provide for perpetual maintenance. Consequently there will be no assessment.

6th—The Mausoleum will be strongly constructed, each compartment hermetically sealed, making it as secure as the pyramids of Egypt or the catacombs of Rome.

7th—Our Mausoleums eliminate the horrors of the grave and the possibility of ghouls and the dissecting tables.

8th—All such provisions should be made while you are in health, thus avoiding the piled up expense incident to death and burial.

9th—The cost is much less than a lot, monument and other cemetery expenses. (Yet you have a monument, in the Mausoleum, which for dignity, durability, and magnificence is unsurpassed).

10th—It is the modern and "Better Way," and you cannot afford to let the opportunity go by to make such provisions.

Any one who desires burial places or wants to look over the photographs and plans of the building, should notify Mr. J. W. Flowers, by Postal Card, addressing him General Delivery Alma, Michigan.

The Flowers Mausoleum Company

Return to Pre-War Prices

A Cut of 25% to 33 1/3%

on all style goods, brings us a long way on the road to a reasonable cost of living.

—We offer a full line of *Winter Coats*, well made of good material, stylishly trimmed and lined, at a price that is bound to sell them.

—We are offering *Stylish Suits* for men and women, latest patterns in both fabric and make, and the price is the most reasonable since the war.

—A look will convince you of the exceptional value of these goods which, coupled with our easy terms of purchase make The National a most desirable place to trade.



National CLOTHING CO.